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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIRST MEETING

Held at Graz, Austria,
on Monday, 27 May 1991, at 3 p.m.

Chairman:	Mr. JANKOWITSCH	(Austria)
later:	Mr. HOHENFELLNER	(Austria)

- Opening of the session
- Minute of silence
- Adoption of the agenda
- Statement by the Chairman
- Election of a new Chairman
- Attendance by non-members of the Committee
- General exchange of views

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

The CHAIRMAN: I declare open the thirty-fourth session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

It is my particular pleasure this afternoon to welcome you to this session, once again in Austria; this is the third time the Committee has met outside Headquarters. It is a particular pleasure to welcome you today in the capital city of Styria. As you will certainly hear during the course of this meeting, Graz is one of the outer space capitals of Austria.

I am particularly pleased to welcome to the opening part of this meeting the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria, Dr. Alois Mock; the Governor of the Province of Styria, Dr. Josef Krainer; the Mayor of the City of Graz, Mr. Alfred Stingl; and many of our customary friends and companions at these meetings, the members of the United Nations Secretariat, headed once again by Under-Secretary-General Vasiliy Safronchuk. I also welcome, of course, all representatives here.

Before coming to the more political parts of our meeting, I shall call on a few of our distinguished guests to address the Committee at the outset. I have the honour to call first on Mr. Vasiliy Safronchuk, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, who will make a statement on behalf of the Secretary-General.

Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs): Let me at the outset express on behalf of the Secretariat my deep condolences on the tragic death of the Austrian nationals killed in the air crash this morning over Thailand.

(Mr. Safronchuk, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs)

It is with great pleasure that I extend to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the Committee, greetings from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, and best wishes for a successful and productive session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

(Mr. Safronchuk, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs)

The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was established by the General Assembly in 1959, with a membership of 24 States, in order to promote international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. During the past 32 years the Committee has compiled an impressive list of achievements and has established a framework of generally accepted principles that ensure that all countries can benefit from space activities. The international issues arising from space activities have grown steadily more complex over the years, and the Committee, which has expanded to 53 States, has adapted its agenda to deal with them. I am sure that the Committee's strong tradition of fruitful cooperation and compromise will serve it well this year and in the future, as it has in the past.

Thanks to the work of the Committee and its member States, outer space has been an exemplary domain of international cooperation. The results of space research and development and the benefits of space applications have been made generally available and are being widely used for social and economic development. As is demonstrated in the Committee's work, scientists and engineers from many countries are developing new technologies and applications for resource management, communications, weather and storm forecasting, environmental monitoring and climate research. These space technologies have supported many international development projects undertaken by the United Nations system, using equipment, expertise and services provided by Member States. It should also be noted that work on space technology and space applications has given rise to spin-off benefits in many other areas of human activities, including medicine, new materials, data processing and manufacturing.

(Mr. Safronchuk, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs)

Within the United Nations system there are many bodies concerned with various aspects of space activities and many agencies that are using space applications in their technical assistance programmes. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has been designated by the General Assembly as the focal point for international cooperation in space, and is the only body in the United Nations system with a mandate covering all aspects of the peaceful uses of outer space. The Committee therefore provides an essential forum for guiding and coordinating the increasingly wide range of space activities undertaken throughout the United Nations system and for continued elaboration of the legal framework in which national and international space activities can continue and develop without conflict.

The Secretariat, working under the Committee's direction, places great importance on the coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system. Within the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs the work of the Outer Space Affairs Division and its Programme on Space Applications is coordinated through regular consultations with other agencies concerned with space activities to ensure that activities are not duplicated and that activities of common interest can be carried out in collaboration, making most effective use of the limited resources available. The highest priority within the Secretariat is given to assistance to developing countries through the United Nations Programme on Space Applications.

Despite the impressive extent of international cooperation in space, the potential benefits of space activities in all countries are far from being fully realized. There is still a great need to facilitate the exchange of scientific and technical information, strengthen international cooperative

(Mr. Safronchuk, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs)

programmes and expand technical assistance to developing countries. The United Nations Secretariat is working with national and international organizations to provide assistance in these areas to Member States.

An important opportunity for promoting a more widespread appreciation of the benefits of space activities is provided by the international agreement to designate 1992 as International Space Year (ISY), a designation which was endorsed by the General Assembly at the recommendation of this Committee. A variety of United Nations activities is being planned, under the guidance of this Committee, to mark this Year, and in particular to promote the participation of developing countries in ISY. The United Nations activities for International Space Year are being coordinated with such international organizations as the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR), the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) and the Space Agency Forum for International Space Year.

The theme of International Space Year has been established as "Mission to Planet Earth", and many of the activities will be directed at the study and monitoring of the global environment. This is clearly an area in which international cooperation is essential if the problems are to be addressed effectively. International Space Year efforts to develop a coordinated programme of space observations and to analyse and use those observations will have enduring benefits for mankind. Many ISY activities will also focus on education, including both specialized training and public information, that will be essential for building support for environmental monitoring programmes. The Committee has an important role to play in guiding United Nations participation in ISY activities.

(Mr. Safronchuk, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs)

Before closing I should like to express our appreciation to the Government of Austria for inviting the Committee to meet here in Graz this year, and in particular to the Foreign Minister for being with us today. Austria has long been a strong supporter of the role of the United Nations in promoting the peaceful uses of outer space. I should also like to thank the Governor of the Province of Styria and the Mayor of the City of Graz for their warm hospitality and the excellent arrangements that have been made for these meetings. I should also mention the head of the Austrian delegation and Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations, Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner, who contributed much to making the meetings possible.

This year, we are informed, Ambassador Peter Jankowitsch will be relinquishing the Chair of the Committee, after almost 20 years, to move on to other responsibilities. On behalf of the Secretary-General, I should like to express appreciation for his dedication to the Committee and to the cause of international cooperation in space. The many achievements of the Committee over the last two decades have been due in no small part to his skill in guiding its work and his untiring efforts to find ways to achieve consensus on difficult issues. I am sure that these same qualities and skills will be valued in his new position, and I wish him the best in the future.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the Mayor of the City of Graz, Mr. Alfred Stingl.

Mr. STINGL (Mayor of Graz): It is a great honour for the city of Graz to welcome the Outer Space Committee delegations of the United Nations. It is the first time in the history of Graz that a Committee of the United Nations has held working meetings in this historically significant city of science and culture. As Mayor, I wish to extend my thanks to the United Nations on behalf of the municipal Council and the city Senate for its decision in this regard.

I greet you, ladies and gentlemen from the Committee's 53 member countries, and I should also like to express my thanks to Foreign Minister Dr. Alois Mock, Under-Secretary and Committee Chairman Dr. Peter Jankowitsch, and the Head of the Styrian Government, Dr. Josef Krainer, for their reliable cooperation. I also extend equally heartfelt thanks to Austria's Ambassador to the United Nations, Dr. Peter Hohenfellner, who supported the preparations for this session in a tremendous way. My thanks also go to the research enterprise, Joanneum Research, for its cooperation.

The 863-year history of Graz, Austria's second-largest city, contains many examples of its importance for Europe. This is true of the more than 400-year tradition of university, research and science; for example, Johannes Kepler studied in Graz. Six university professors from our city have received the Nobel Prize: Fritz Pregl, Julius-Wagner-Jauregg, Erwin Schrödinger, Otto Loewi, Viktor Hess and Karl von Frisch.

Graz has always been a city of the arts; architecture was and is a formative element in the city's structural history. After the destruction accompanying the Second World War, the city experienced a dynamic

(Mr. Stingl, Mayor, Graz)

reconstruction, but always with a consciousness of its historical heritage, balanced by a readiness for new things in culture, science and politics.

Today our city is not only the centre for Austrian space research, with the Institute for Communications Technology and Wave Propagation, which is known both in the East and in the West and is under the direction of University Professor Dr. Riedler. Graz has also moved into a new European middle point in the area of the sciences, due particularly to the political changes in Eastern, Central and Southern Europe. This results in new tasks, opportunities, developments and hopes. At this time, all our hopes are focused on peace for the world and opportunities for the development of mankind. Much in our time seems to be working against this. World wide, people are asking themselves why more money must be spent for weapons than for aid to sustain life. We ask ourselves why, after all mankind's experiences, there is still violence and war instead of the coexistence of nations in peace.

The United Nations and its affiliated organizations can neither provide all the answers nor solve all the problems. They are, however, an indispensable forum for a world community which aims to regulate power mechanisms and conflicts of interest on the basis of progressive human civilization.

The Outer Space Committee of the United Nations has adopted the principle of progress in peace with a view developing human civilization. In this context, application-oriented space research is of special importance for the future. Examples of this are telecommunications, material science experiments, biology and medicine and space transport systems. It seems to me, however, that the monitoring of the Earth with respect to pollution levels in the atmosphere, the ozone problem, or the carbon dioxide strain on world regions, including the movement of pollutants, could be optimized

(Mr. Stingl, Mayor of Graz)

scientifically through the development of remote observation systems. Thus, a small country like Austria must also demonstrate an alert interest in the peaceful exploration of space.

Man's pushing back of the frontiers of space, in an almost inexplicable cosmos, should never serve to promote a sort of star wars, but should exclusively serve the exploration of space and dimensions, which will win man knowledge and experience and bring creation's secrets closer to man, because man's spirit seems to be inexhaustible in its endeavour to be, to think new thoughts, to explore, to dare.

In the face of man's responsibility for the world, may the insatiable spirit of research always be accompanied by ethics and morals; these must be the foundation of all science, of all human activity - so that the future has a future.

In this spirit, ladies and gentlemen, I welcome you to Graz.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Mayor for his statement and for the warm hospitality that he and his city, Graz, are extending to the Committee. It will not surprise representatives to learn that one of the leading spirits in organizing these meetings in this beautiful city was Mr. Stingl himself.

I now call on the Governor of the Federal Province of Styria, Dr. Josef Krainer.

Mr. KRAINER (Governor of Styria): As Governor of Styria I take great pleasure in welcoming all those present most cordially to the thirty-fourth session of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Last Saturday another important international congress began in Graz, on the pressing and urgent problems of the third world, with the opening speech made by Willi Brandt. The coincidence in time of these two important

(Mr. Krainer, Governor of Styria)

conferences shows us very clearly and impressively the great chances and prospects, but also the risks and dangers, our world today is exposed to. We consider it a special distinction that the Committee, too, has chosen Styria as its venue.

Please permit me first to introduce briefly our Province to you, as the Mayor of Graz has already done for this city. For many centuries Styria has been at the crossroads of three European cultures - the German, the Romanic and the Slavic. At the same time, our capital city was the residence of the Emperor, in particular of the rulers of Inner-Austria, who governed territories now part of Yugoslavia, Italy and Austria from Graz. These are the very regions which today work together in the association ARGE-Alpen-Adria.

We were among those who encouraged its foundation in 1978 and were able, even in times of global political tension, through cooperation across ideological barriers - the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Warsaw Pact, the non-aligned and neutral countries - to anticipate many developments that became feasible internationally only as a result of the East-West dialogue of the miracle year 1989. This has also summoned Styria back from its peripheral situation into the heart of Europe.

(Mr. Krainer, Governor of Styria)

The most outstanding ruler of the Hapsburg countries of Inner-Austria, Archduke Charles II, founded the renowned University of Graz in 1585.

The United Nations has always played a significant role in coordinating space activities and in establishing legal guidelines. Space, on the one hand, contains tremendous scientific and economic potential. On the other hand, it could also constitute a fatal threat to mankind if activities are not guided by a sense of prudence and responsibility. The United Nations is instrumental in averting this danger through its Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Austria, as I have already said, is a small but highly developed country in terms of technology and science and, to the extent possible, it tries to contribute its share to the peaceful uses of outer space. I would not like to leave unmentioned today Austria's scientific activities in space which, as has already been mentioned, are part of a long tradition. In our time, projects producing important results have been carried out by the Graz University of Technology and, since 1969, by the Institute of Space Research of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. In this connection, joint projects with the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Scandinavian countries on ionosphere and magnetosphere research, as well as in the field of interplanetary space, deserve particular mention. At the same time, a centre for research in the area of communication satellites was developed within the Joanneum Research Association, which is commissioned to do research under contracts concluded with the European Space Agency (ESA) and other organizations. Special research stations, such as the Lustbühel and the Hilmwarte observatories, which also serve such other related disciplines as

(Mr. Krainer, Governor of Styria)

satellite geodesy and astronomy, could be established. The Government of Styria has not only followed these activities, which are inseparably linked to our highly esteemed Professor Willibald Riedler, as the Mayor already said, with keen interest, but has already granted them financial support.

There are plans to concentrate these activities visibly by founding a space centre in Graz. Talks to that end between the Austrian Academy of Sciences, the city of Graz and my Government are well under way.

In the next few days, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space will take up a number of important issues relating both to scientific research and to the technological use of outer space, and will carry on the discussion of legal aspects in connection with space. It is with the greatest pleasure that I welcome you, high-ranking representatives from so many countries, here in Styria. I wish you the best of success in your work, and thank the United Nations, the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Chairman and Ambassador Hohenfellner once again most sincerely for bringing this important meeting to Graz.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Governor of Styria for his comments and extend to him our gratitude for the kind hospitality the Government of Styria is extending to the Committee.

I now call on the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria, Dr. Alois Möck, to address the Committee.

Mr. MOCK (Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria): On behalf of the Government of Austria, I as pleased to welcome you to Graz. We feel very much honoured to host this Committee during its important deliberations.

(Mr. Mock, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria)

Your meeting in this beautiful city of Graz also signals a significant development in the political fabric of Austria: the ever-increasing role played by the federal provinces in Austrian foreign policy. Graz, the capital city of Styria, has already become a focal point of transboundary political endeavours, in particular those related to the neighbouring countries to the east and south-east of Austria. Styria and Graz are most dynamic elements of the political landscape of this country. The hosting of a meeting of the most future-oriented body of the United Nations fits in well with this new dynamism displayed by one of the oldest parts of Austria.

Austria's active participation in the work of the United Nations, its membership of the European Community and the further intensification of its relations with the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe are among the priorities of our foreign policy. Austrian involvement in the United Nations is best reflected by its continuous participation in peace-keeping operations since 1962.

In recent months the active role played by Austria in the United Nations was also fully recognized during elections to several key bodies of the world Organization: its election to the Security Council by 150 votes out of 154 is the best record of any member of that main organ of the United Nations. Moreover, Austria had the best record of all Western members of the Economic and Social Council; it also received 41 out of 43 votes when it was elected to the Commission on Human Rights. This positive account reflects the degree of confidence enjoyed by Austria in the United Nations system. We Austrians will spare no effort to measure up to those high expectations.

Austria is proud of its role in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of

(Mr. Mock, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria)

Outer Space. For many decades, Austrian diplomats have been guiding your work. Until recently, the Chair was successfully occupied by Dr. Peter Jankowitsch, former Austrian Ambassador to the United Nations, former Minister for Foreign Affairs and current Under-Secretary of State in the Office of the Prime Minister.

Activities concerning the peaceful uses of outer space and international cooperation in that area for the good of all mankind are major tasks of increasing importance. I firmly believe that today, perhaps more than ever before, outer space, with its enormous technological challenges, is about to become one of the crucial, possibly decisive, areas of international cooperation, an area in which new forms of international cooperation have to be developed.

(Mr. Mock, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria)

Not too long ago, patterns of confrontation were extended to the policies pertaining to the use of outer space. At that time, the Committee particularly stressed the need to preserve outer space for exclusively peaceful uses. The danger of the increasing militarization of outer space haunted mankind. But the times of confrontation in outer space, partly owing to recent changes in the international political situation, belong to the past. Solidarity and cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, once considered a moral and political postulate, have become a rational necessity. International cooperation has become an essential element of policies of "sustainable development". Mankind as a whole is confronted with a major challenge: to strike a balance between the development process and the availability of environmental and natural resources. The uses of outer space for information gathering, communication and resource management will also allow for a better understanding of the interdependence between resource systems and their use. Thus, the peaceful uses of outer space contribute to the development process. The presence of Man in outer space has always been associated with highly dramatic events. We all remember the launching of the first satellite, Sputnik, or the presence of Yuri Gagarin as the first man in outer space or the pictures of Neil Armstrong setting foot on the Moon.

Much has happened since: in a quiet, perhaps less spectacular, but by far no less important process, peaceful space applications have decisively changed the quality of life in all parts of the world, in the industrialized as well as in the developing countries. It has become difficult to envisage daily life without such services as telecommunications, resource surveys or weather forecasts. And this process has by far not come to an end. The

(Mr. Mock, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria)

pictures of our Earth, which we receive from satellites, raise more than anything else mankind's awareness of the fragility of "Spaceship Earth".

A few years ago, this Committee agreed on a set of "Principles relating to remote sensing of the Earth from outer space". A compromise had to be struck between the freedom of space activities, the general interest in acquiring global environmental and resource data and the right of countries to control access to their natural resources. The observation of the Earth from outer space, providing a wealth of global information continuously and objectively, has become a basic means to learn about the various phenomena that condition the environment in all their aspects. We all depend on adequate access to this information. The consequences of changes in the international climate from unlimited urban growth, water, sea, air and land pollution, desertification, uncontrolled forest clearance or the death of the forest through acid rain - just to give a few examples - are brought to public awareness by striking pictures taken by satellites. We know today that no part of the globe is immune from threats to the environment. The participation of all countries, and of the developing countries in particular, in programmes in this field will enable them to derive maximum benefits for their own socio-economic development, which again is crucial for the preservation of the global environment.

Outer space has sometimes been called one of the "last frontiers" of mankind. I hesitate to associate myself with this statement, as the ultimate frontier for Man rather lies within himself. Yet, we may need something of the frontier spirit in order to overcome national narrowness and achieve global generosity, to replace weakness by courage and to defeat confrontation by cooperation. Let me conclude, then, with my sincere wish that some of this

(Mr. Mock, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria)

spirit of generosity, courage and cooperation will also prevail in your deliberations during the next two weeks.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to thank the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria for the statement he has made to the Committee.

MINUTE OF SILENCE

The CHAIRMAN: I should also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Vasiliy Safronchuk for the expression of condolences extended not only to the delegation of Austria but also to the many delegations whose nationals were among the 200 victims of the air disaster, possibly of terrorist origin, which occurred this morning over Thailand. This is all the more tragic in view of the importance of air travel these days, not only for the work of the Committee but also for the conduct of ordinary life. I think it would thus be appropriate to stand and observe a minute of silence for the victims of the air disaster.

The participants observed a minute of silence.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (A/AC.105/L.189)

The agenda was adopted.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: It is my most pleasant duty, presiding over the work of the Committee for the last time, to welcome you once again to Austria, Styria and Graz and to the thirty-forth session, an important one, I trust, of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. May I also, at the outset, extend a special word of greeting to a new delegation among us, the delegation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, which is participating in the work of the Committee for the first time.

(The Chairman)

As usual, I shall review with you the results of the last sessions of our two Subcommittees, and consider the ways and means for our Committee successfully to discharge its duties and its mandate as the focal point for international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space - a mandate about which we have been reminded in the opening addresses.

I should also like on this occasion to reflect with you not only on some of the most recent developments that have occurred in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space but also on some of the accomplishments of the Committee over the past 34 years, during 20 of which I have had the honour of being your Chairman.

As representatives are perfectly aware, the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and that of its two subsidiary bodies has, over the past decades led to the formulation and adoption of a number of important international legal instruments, to the development of a new branch of international law, space law, including first and foremost the "Magna Carta" of outer space, the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. That Treaty remains the cornerstone of international cooperation in outer space and is one of the Committee's proudest achievements. It was followed by the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space, the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects, the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space and by the last major agreement - unfortunately already a couple of years ago - the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. More recently, the Committee was able to agree on a set of Principles Relating to Remote Sensing of the Earth from Outer Space. Those are some of the

(The Chairman)

Committee's leading achievements. I hope that it will continue to write future space law whose importance will certainly be borne out in the future.

Also in the past 30 years, the world has benefited in many ways from space research, sometimes thanks to the example offered by the Committee. Space has opened up new horizons in science as demonstrated by many recent magnificent achievements, such as the trips of Voyager, Giotto, Magellan and others. We have seen the use of space technologies become part of the everyday lives of millions of people. A good example of this are the METEOSAT images we see on our television screens night after night. Communications satellites have revolutionized global communications, and mobile communications systems hold great promise for the future. Satellite observations are increasingly important for accurate and timely weather forecasts and many other applications.

All these benefits, which space spin-offs offer society, are now taken for granted by the public. Yet, we are entering an era in which such developments will exert even greater influence on our living conditions and quality of life. Thus, I believe the 1990s will be the decade of the environment. We are increasingly faced with such global environmental problems as ozone depletion, global warming and the loss of a large portion of the world's forests in the developing countries. The challenge of understanding the Earth as an integrated system can only be faced through the joint effort of the international community, with space exploration playing an ever-increasing role. Thus, I am pleased to note that in the 1990s the major space agencies of the world are planning a fleet of advanced spacecraft as part of their contribution to the Global Change Programme. This initiative could represent the largest cooperative space effort ever envisaged.

(The Chairman)

Earth observation has also, through the "Mission to Planet Earth", been made the primary focus of the International Space Year mentioned earlier. Data from space is essential to promote further understanding of the complex interactions between the different components of the Earth system (atmosphere, oceans, ice, land, physics, chemistry and biology). Members are aware that not enough is yet known about the threats to man's environment for definitive conclusions to be reached. The findings, for example, of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change demonstrate that today's forecasts still lack the necessary degree of reliability in many respects, particularly as regards the pace, scale and regional distribution of climate change. It is therefore going to take a long-term research effort, lasting more than a decade certainly, combined with intensified observation of the ocean/atmosphere/biosphere system to obtain a detailed understanding of the mechanisms at work.

Observation from space has come to play an ever important role in establishing the real facts about threats to the environment. In that regard, satellites have become a highly effective means of complementing the activities of ground-based observation networks studying the phenomena that determine our environment. We therefore need plans for making even more exhaustive use of space technology in the cause of improved understanding of our environment.

Finally, in that respect, may I also draw the attention of representatives to an area of space application, perhaps also a future space application, that seemed to be highly relevant during the days of the energy crisis in the late 1970s and early 1980s, but which then somehow sank into oblivion. I am referring to the case for the development of solar power

(The Chairman)

systems so as to complement and perhaps replace some terrestrial sources of energy.

Allow me now to review some of the major space developments of the past year and earlier. I am pleased to note that despite many developments of an internal nature the Soviet Union in 1990 made 75 space launches, one more than in 1989. The United States total of 27 was that country's highest in 12 years, and is set to soon rising. Europe's Arianespace made five launches, China five, Japan three and Israel one. A total of 150 satellites were launched last year, representing an expenditure estimated by some experts to amount to some $20 billion. On top of that, of course, are the long-term investments in space infrastructure, the new generations of expendable launchers and space ports to encourage, inter alia, international industry to develop its capabilities to make use of these facilities. Progress on the development of a commercial spaceport in Florida and of an international spaceport in Queensland, Australia, using a Soviet launcher are other impressive developments. Revenues earned by Spot Image and EOSAT on their remote-sensing images were at last taking off, demonstrating the possible commercial benefits of space flights.

There have been setbacks in 1990, as well, but they have been largely overcome or compensated by progress in the exploration and uses of outer space. The Hubble Space Telescope, for one, is beginning to penetrate the mysteries of the double planet Pluto/Charon, the solar system's only remaining planet not yet visited by a spacecraft. The Hubble Space Telescope is also studying storms on Saturn and jets of materials streaming away from the Orion Nebula. It should continue to reveal secrets of the universe until well into the next century. In addition to the launching of Hubbel, 1990 ended with five other successful United States space shuttle flights, despite five

(The Chairman)

months' stand-down owing to hydrogen leaks. The Galileo spacecraft started on its long journey to explore Jupiter and its many moons; and Magellan, after some early problems, is steadily mapping the mysterious domed mountains and "crater farms" of Venus. And yet another scientific spacecraft, the Ulysses of ESA, was launched on a unique mission to study the poles of the sun. Such knowledge is vital to our future understanding of Earth's environment and its likely behaviour.

(The Chairman)

But there have been spin offs of interest not only to the scientific community but also to many other people. I am talking here of the interest in the recovery by the shuttle in February last year of the Long-Duration Exposure Facility (LDEF). About 14 million seeds were brought back to Earth after six years' exposure to the space environment. What this might lead to is illustrated by the fact that irradiation of white grapefruit seeds gave us the much-loved pink grapefruit. Whether the produce from the LDEF seeds will result in similar beneficial mutations remains to be seen, but this remains another interesting example of spin offs from outer space. Many other achievements could be mentioned.

I am particularly pleased to note also progress in the talks among experts from the United States, Europe and the USSR on the joint development of manned lunar bases and missions to Mars.

On 12 April 1991 we marked the thirtieth anniversary of the first human flight into outer space, another significant anniversary. Indeed, since Yuri Gagarin circled the Earth much has been accomplished in the peaceful exploration of outer space.

In the now common field of space transportation, continued improvement in the international climate has led to increased cooperation. In addition to launching a communications and meteorological satellite and a recoverable satellite for remote sensing, life sciences and material sciences, China also provided launches for the Asiasat commercial communication satellite and Pakistan's Badr experimental satellite. A Japanese cosmonaut paid a short visit to the USSR Mir space station, on which astrophysical, geophysical, biological and medical experiments are being conducted. Training for similar missions in the future is making good progress, involving astronauts or

(The Chairman)

"Euronauts" from Austria, France, Germany and the United Kingdom. I am pleased to note too that Ms. Helen Sharman of the United Kingdom has just returned safely from a short visit to the Soviet Mir space station. As all are aware, the next visit will be by an Austrian "Euronaut" or "Austronaut".

The United States, in cooperation with Canada, Japan and the European Space Agency (ESA), has continued work on the development of the international space station Freedom. In addition it has cooperated with, or launched satellites for, Germany, India, the United Kingdom, Indonesia, INMARSAT and INTELSAT.

There has also been progress through international cooperation in the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme. Many countries have joined in the international effort in this field, which is of fundamental importance for examining the future habitability of our planet and for managing the common natural resources of the Earth.

There has also been an increase in international cooperation in the field of planetary exploration, some example of which I have already mentioned such as the Magellan spacecraft orbiting Venus, the Galileo spacecraft on a complex trajectory to Jupiter, and Ulysses. Similarly, the use of spacecraft for making astronomical observations from above the atmosphere has greatly advanced our knowledge of the universe by allowing observations in all regions of the electromagnetic spectrum. With the launching of the Hubble Space Telescope, the Gamma Ray Observatory, the Rosat X-ray observatory and the Gamma-1 and Granat astrophysical observatories, astronomers now have a powerful array of tools for their investigation of the universe. I am pleased to note that these and other projects that are now being planned are open to broad international cooperation.

(The Chairman)

The launching of the Soviet Union's Almaz radar satellite on 31 March this year provides scientists and others with new means for examining the Earth, adding to a growing international capability for managing natural resources and monitoring the environment.

Ending a five and a half year period during which no spacewalks were performed by NASA crew members the crew of the space shuttle Atlantis, which was launched on 5 April this year, performed exercises which provided valuable data for developing the space station Freedom and repaired and deployed the Gamma Ray Observatory. The launching of the space shuttle Discovery on 28 April this year, 10 years after the launching of the first space shuttle on 12 April 1981, marked the beginning of the second decade of operation of this reusable space transportation system.

Let me now draw attention to the agenda items that are before this Committee for consideration during the next two weeks here in Graz.

As members will recall, the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, as in past years, instructed the Committee to consider as a matter of priority "Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes" and to report thereon to the Assembly at its forty-sixth session. The Committee, as members will recall, has continued to make very serious efforts to reach a broad consensus on this item. I am certain that at the current session the Committee will spare no effort in this regard, and that the Committee's efforts to expand the common ground on this question of admitted difficulty will be just as strenuous.

Before going into the details of the work of the two subcommittees, let me once again express our appreciation for the excellent work of the two subcommittee Chairmen: Professor John Carver of Australia, who I understand

(The Chairman)

will be with us later in Graz, Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee; and Mr. Vaclav Mikulka of Czechoslovakia, Chairman of the Legal Subcommittee. We are deeply indebted to the subcommittee chairmen for the smooth and productive functioning of those two subsidiary bodies.

As far as the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee is concerned, the Sub-Committee has as in the past considered on a priority basis the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82) and matters relating to the remote sensing of the Earth by satellites and to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. It also considered questions relating to space transportation systems and their implications for future activities in space, examination of the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit, matters relating to life sciences, including space medicine, planetary exploration and astronomy, as well as progress in national and international space activities related to the Earth's environment, in particular progress in the Geosphere-Biosphere Programme.

As the expansion and orientation of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications is and remains an integral part of the implementation of the recommendations of the UNISPACE 82, the Subcommittee continued the practice of considering jointly the two items dealing with the Programme on Space Applications and the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82. In considering those agenda items the Subcommittee remained cognizant of the position of the General Assembly, which at its forty-fifth session again emphasized the urgency and importance of fully implementing the

(The Chairman)

recommendations of the Conference, held almost a decade ago. One can fully understand the sense of urgency expressed by the Assembly. Once more, the Assembly identified four urgent questions to be considered by the Committee.

Thus, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 45/72, the Subcommittee convened for the fifth time the Working Group of the Whole to Evaluate the Implementation of the Recommendations of UNISPACE 82; the report of the Working Group is contained in annex II of the Sub-Committee's report.

Let me congratulate Mr. Muhammad Nasim Shah of Pakistan, who in chairing the Working Group for the first time has maintained the tradition of cooperation and efficiency established by his predecessor, Mr. Raimundo Gonzalez of Chile.

The Working Group of the Whole, in reviewing its mandate and the status of the implementation of the UNISPACE 82 recommendations, has called attention again to some of the recommendations it made in previous reports. Among other things, the Working Group reiterated its recommendation to the Committee that it request all States, particularly those with major space or space-related capabilities, as well as international organizations with space-related activities, to continue to inform the Secretary-General annually as appropriate about those space activities that were or could be the subject of greater international cooperation, with particular emphasis on the needs of developing countries.

(The Chairman)

Also, by noting with appreciation the reports prepared by the Secretariat and the other steps being undertaken by Member States and international organizations in implementation of the UNISPACE 82 recommendations, the Working Group recalled paragraph 8 (c) of General Assembly resolution 45/72 and again recommended that the United Nations continue to lead - not just follow - the international effort to establish regional centres for space science and technology education in existing national and regional educational institutions in developing countries. In its discussion of regional and interregional mechanisms of cooperation, the Subcommittee, it should be noted, also urged Member States to support the development of such regional centres and requested the Outer Space Affairs Division to make every possible effort to obtain the support of other relevant international organizations, keeping it informed of further developments on these matters.

Another noteworthy proposal of the Working Group of the Whole to which I should like to draw the attention of the Committee is its intention to make at its next session a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82. It has thus requested the Secretariat to prepare, taking into account previous reports, a background paper to assist it in this regard. Such an assessment would, I believe, be extremely relevant and timely, especially when it is borne in mind that next year will be the International Space Year, coinciding with the tenth anniversary of the holding of the UNISPACE 82 conference. It is therefore fitting that a balance sheet be established showing the extent to which the international space community, countries members of this Committee and others have responded to the important recommendations of UNISPACE 82.

(The Chairman)

Those are just a few of the proposals and recommendations contained in the Working Group's report. The Working Group has continued to spare no effort in its quest to strengthen the basis for further progress in the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82. But as I have said repeatedly and as I want to say again - and as my successor will certainly say as well - these efforts can bear fruit only if, when the information requested is received, it is carefully evaluated, since sound analysis is necessary if substantive conclusions are to be drawn.

The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee also reviewed the wide range of activities of the Programme on Space Applications, and commended the work carried out during the past year. It also reviewed progress on the 1991 activities and approved the proposed programme for 1992.

Since its previous session, additional voluntary contributions had been offered by various member States and organizations to support the Programme on Space Applications. The Subcommittee noted this with appreciation. It felt constrained, however, once again to express concern over the limited financial resources available for carrying out a programme of great importance for many member countries. It appealed to Member States for their support through voluntary contributions to the Programme. Over the years I have added my voice to those who have expressed similar concerns, and I should like to do so once again by reminding Member States and perhaps even non-member States of the growing importance of space science and technology for social and economic development. The Subcommittee's appeal therefore deserves attention and serious consideration by the United Nations family, and in particular strong support by members of this Committee.

(The Chairman)

In discussing remote sensing of the Earth by satellite, the Subcommittee once more emphasized the importance of making remote sensing data and analysed information available to all countries at reasonable cost and in a timely manner. It also reiterated its view that remote sensing activities should take into account the need to provide appropriate and non-discriminatory assistance to meet the needs of developing countries. I need not dwell on this question since I have repeatedly stated my views on the importance of international cooperation, particularly in the field of remote sensing of the Earth.

I must also note my concern about the direction taken in the Subcommittee's debate on the simple question of nuclear power sources in outer space. While there seemed to be some understanding of the desire for the Subcommittee to ensure the technical accuracy of its recommendations, it is also important that the work of the Committee and its Subcommittee - and I say this with all seriousness - move forward and not backward. I hope that it will not be necessary for the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee to re-embark on prolonged negotiations. It is my fear that the work which has been meticulously done over many years in the Working Group on Nuclear Power Sources as well as in the two Subcommittees and in the Committee itself will come to nothing if we do not consistently build upon agreements which have been laboriously reached with a great deal of compromise by many delegations.

While the Working Group on Nuclear Power Sources did not meet formally at the session, the Subcommittee has recommended that the item be retained on a priority basis in its agenda for the next session and that the question of reconvening the Working Group be considered by this Committee at its current session in the light of the work carried out by the Legal Subcommittee on the subject at its thirtieth session.

(The Chairman)

On the question of space transportation systems, the Subcommittee reviewed national and cooperative programmes and continued to stress the importance of international cooperation for providing all countries with access to the benefits of space science and technology. Similarly, under the item concerning the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit as well as space communications, the Subcommittee took note of the various current and planned programmes of Member States and international organizations. However, there is little that I can report in the way of progress in this area. The Subcommittee will continue to consider the item.

On the scientific matters relating to life sciences, including space medicine, the Geosphere-Biosphere (global change) Programme, planetery exploration and astronomy, the Subcommittee heard special presentations by experts from various countries and international organizations. The somewhat lengthy official theme for the 1991 session was "Applications of airborne and satellite remote sensing for prospecting mineral and groundwater resources and for monitoring and managing biological resources, with emphasis on agriculture, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries". The importance to the human race of continued research and exploration in these vital areas cannot be overstated, especially if projects in all those areas are open to broad international cooperation. The Subcommittee has therefore recommended that these items be retained on the agenda of its next session. This is also the occasion to express once more the Committee's and my own thanks to the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) and the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) for their very instructive symposium on the 1991 theme.

(The Chairman)

The theme fixed for special attention at the 1992 session of the Subcommittee is "Space technology and the protection of the Earth's environment: development of endogenous capabilities, in particular in the developing countries and in the context of International Space Year". The Subcommittee has recommended that COSPAR and IAF, in liaison with Member States, be invited once again to arrange a symposium on the theme, with as wide a participation as possible. The Subcommittee has also recommended that special presentations to be made in conjunction with its session should be planned by Member States in the light of the relevance of the technical presentations to the Subcommittee's work and of their contribution to the Subcommittee's substantive consideration of items on the agenda. I hope the Committee will have no difficulty in endorsing those recommendations.

(The Chairman)

While International Space Year and space and Earth environment are not items on the Subcommittee's formal agenda, the Subcommittee has devoted a fair amount of time to these two questions, and I should like to make a few comments. As I noted in my statement last year, an important element of the work of the Commmittee and the United Nations for this year and next year will be International Space Year. I stressed then, as I should like to do now, the General Assembly's endorsement of the Committee's recommendation that international cooperation should be promoted through the Year and should be carried out for the benefit and in the interest of all States, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries.

At its recent session the Subcommittee again urged member States and international organizations to consider supporting additional scientific and technical activities in cooperation with the United Nations as part of International Space Year and reminded them that it was particularly important that voluntary contributions be increased, since all such activities were to be carried out without any impact on the regular budget of the United Nations or the existing programme of work of the Programme on Space Applications. Sufficient financial resources are therefore absolutely essential if the goals are to be accomplished.

I therefore urge members to give serious consideration to the note verbale which the Secretary-General has sent to Member States inviting not only additional proposals but voluntary contributions as well in support of United Nations activities for International Space Year.

As members will recall, the General Assembly has also endorsed the Subcommittee's recommendation that in planning their activities Member States should consider ways in which those activities could complement the efforts

(The Chairman)

under way for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, also planned for 1992. We are becoming more and more aware of the threats posed to the environment by human activities, and I for one am very pleased that the major focus of the activities of the International Space Year will be on the use of space technology for studying and monitoring the environment. Yet I cannot fail to echo the concern expressed in the Subcommittee that even as we seek to study and monitor the environment the amount of space debris continues to grow. I think there is general agreement that sooner or later this question has to be addressed at the international level. The General Assembly has already recognized this by noting in its resolution 45/72 that space debris could be an appropriate subject for discussion by this Committee in the future. I hope the Committee will make some progress towards reaching agreement on how to deal with this pressing problem.

Now a few words on the thirtieth session of the Legal Subcommittee. The Legal Subcommittee has reestablished its Working Group on the use of nuclear power wources in outer space, ably chaired by Mr. Hans Winkler of Austria, in order to continue its consideration of the elaboration of draft principles relevant to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. It was hoped that with the consensus reached in 1990 on draft principle 3 the Working Group at this session of the Legal Subcommittee could have turned its attention to the remaining draft principles and arrived at a consensus on a complete set of draft principles on nuclear power sources. With some reluctance I have to report that this was not the case. Unfortunately, as reflected in the Working Group's report, there was little progress towards consensus on a complete set of principles. After the real progress of the last few years and the expectations that had been raised, the lack of progress this year was deeply disappointing.

(The Chairman)

I think we all understand that no set of principles is going to be ideal from the point of view of all delegations. The progress that has been made on the agreed draft principles therefore represents compromise by all delegations. But if each delegation insists on a text that exactly meets its wishes there will never be agreement. I therefore strongly appeal to all delegations to find a way to move forward on the basis of past negotiations and agreements, bearing in mind that the draft principles provide for review and, if necessary, revision in the future.

Concerning the definition and delimitation of outer space and the question of the geostationary orbit, the Working Group on agenda item 4 reconvened under the chairmanship of Mr. Estanislao Zawels of Argentina and, as it has done previously, divided its consideration of the item into two parts. Again deadlock arose between those delegations that considered that the definition and delimitation of airspace and outer space was a practical and legal necessity and other delegations that maintained that there was no need to establish a juridical boundary between airspace and outer space. I would note here that there was a proposal to begin an exchange of views in the Working Group concerning aerospace vehicles as a way of focusing the discussion on practical issues.

Concerning the newest agenda item, on outer space benefits, I am pleased to note that the Working Group on the question has begun its work under the experienced guidance of Mr. Raimundo Gonzalez of Chile. While little substantive progress was made on the question, a variety of views was expressed and towards the end of the Working Group's session a working paper was submitted by a number of countries of the Group of 77. I hope that those views will provide the basis for more substantive discussions at next year's session. I would also note that the Working Group is still considering

(The Chairman)

how best to approach this item, and delegations may wish to submit other proposals for consideration. The ideas and views expressed in the Working Group are contained in annex III of the Subcommittee's report.

This brief résumé of the reports of the two Subcommittees should give us much food for thought and much new impetus for action. I hope that during the current session of this Committee we will be able to have substantive and productive discussions on the various agenda items so that at the end the Committee will be in a position to provide guidance to the Subcommittees in order to promote progress in their work.

With regard to the Committee's other agenda items, we have dealt at some length upon the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82 in the context of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, and these two items will be considered jointly as usual. On the item concerning spin-off benefits, the Committee has before it a study prepared at the Committee's request by the Outer Space Affairs Division. This is an important item, and we ought to make sure we give it adequate attention in our debate.

That brings me to the conclusion of my review of the activities of the past year and the work before the Committee.

Let me note that space activities and international cooperation in space have changed dramatically since I became Chairman in 1972. During the past two decades, as I said earlier, the Committee has played an important role in establishing the general framework for international cooperation. It has expanded its membership and its scope, focusing its work as required by the evolution of space science, technology and applications.

I would say that one major change over the period has been the growing importance of space activities for economic, social and cultural development,

(The Chairman)

and hence the increasing interest by many nations, particularly developing countries, in space activities. The work of the United Nations in ensuring that all countries have practical access to the benefits of space activities was just beginning in 1972 and is now the major focus of our work.

The growing importance of space activities and the growing number of countries concerned have of course sometimes made the Committee's work more difficult. Consensus may now be harder to reach. But in general I think the Committee has retained its admirable ability to come to consensus and to work in a spirit of compromise and cooperation.

(The Chairman)

As the moment apprcaches of my leaving the chairmanship of this Committee and handing it over to my successor - whom I trust the Committee will elect in a few minutes - I should like to conclude by extending my thanks not only to all delegations that over the years have provided so much support and inspiration, but also to the members of the particularly qualified and hard-working Secretariat. In the course of nearly 20 years at the head of this Committee, I have been privileged to work with more than one Director of the Outer Space Affairs Division. All of them have left their mark on the annals of the Committee, beginning with Mr. Abdelghani of Egypt, moving on to Mr. Perek and Mr. Kopal of what is now called the Czech and Slovak Republic, then Mr. Robinson of the United States, and today our indefatigable and always resourceful Mr. Jasentuliyana - Nandi, as he is affectionately known by many in this Committee.

I have been privileged to work over the years with a number of exceptionally gifted and dedicated Vice-Chairmen proposed by our member country Romania and with an equally gifted and even more hard-working number of Rapporteurs proposed by Brazil. These Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteurs alike have given the best of their diplomatic talents in leading important areas of work in the Committee, in drafting conventions and draft principles, in preparing UNISPACE 82, and in masterminding other important activities of the Committee. I have also been privileged to work with many distinguished space experts, of whom the latest, Mr. Abiodun, has rendered particularly invaluable service to the Committee and its outer space programme.

At the moment of my leaving the chairmanship of the Committee, I should also like to express my confidence in the future of the Committee and particularly in the future of international cooperation for the peaceful uses of outer space. In this context I wish to present a final thought which

(The Chairman)

occurs to me when I consider that, in my 20 years as Chairman of this Committee, I have witnessed the development of many forms of space exploration, uses and applications. I have always been struck - and I have perhaps been too discreet about it previously - by an apparent paradox: on the one hand, the wealth of the means of national space exploration efforts; and, on the other, the relative weakness of the international instruments created to provide the legal and political framework for the safe development of the same activities. Thus, over 35 years of organized space activities of national and international characters - activities that have fundamentally changed humanity's presence in space and have seen the appearance of a whole new culture and civilization of space technologies and space objects with multiple functions - over all these years that have brought a wealth of new wisdom to the Earth, the instruments for international cooperation in outer space have remained virtually the same. The structures, and competencies and resources, of our Committee have remained virtually unchanged as have the composition and powers of the Outer Space Affairs Division in the United Nations Secretariat.

My question, therefore, is whether the time has not come for a strengthening of these structures and whether the time might not be ripe perhaps to begin considering the creation of the foundations of new institutional frameworks, not excluding the creation some time in the future of an international space organization that will respond to many of the new requirements in space cooperation and development.

Finally, before leaving the chairmanship, I express the hope that members will manage in their work together to keep and develop what has perhaps been

(The Chairman)

the most precious asset in our hands, an asset which the Committee has worked and sometimes suffered for, but also often fought for: the maintenance, not predominantly but exclusively, of outer space for peaceful purposes for the benefit of all mankind.

ELECTION OF A NEW CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: As I have just mentioned, it is with great regret that I have decided to relinquish the chairmanship of the Committee due to my recent appointment as Secretary of State in the Federal Chancellery of Austria, which requires my assumption of a certain number of Government responsibilities.

As members have already been informed, Mr. Peter Hohenfellner, Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations, has been nominated by the Government of Austria as a candidate for the chairmanship of the Committee. I now put that nomination before the Committee. Of course, I am prepared to entertain any other nominations.

As there are none, I consider Mr. Hohenfellner to have been elected unanimously as Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. I should like, on behalf of the members of the Committee, to congratulate him. I now pass the gavel to him with my very best wishes, secure in the knowledge that the Committee will be well served by his competence, of which so many of you are aware. I now invite Mr. Hohenfellner to take his place on the rostrum.

Mr. Hohenfellner (Austria) took the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank you, Mr. Minister of State, for your extremely kind words. If I am able to guide the Committee half as well as you have done during the past 20 years, then I should consider that I have succeeded in doing a superlative job as Chairman.

(The Chairman)

If I may, I should also like, on behalf of this Committee which you have guided so brilliantly for the last 20 years, to say "Thank you". Your chairmanship, Mr. Minister of State, not only has enhanced the very stature of the Committee, but, if I may say so, has proved to be an invaluable asset time and time again, and in particular during the time when the Committee's very existence was at stake. We have not forgotten this. So, with gratitude, we say "Thank you" and extend to you our very best wishes for your success in your new appointment.

I should also like to express my appreciation to all my friends and colleagues for having elected me to the post of Chairman of this important Committee. It is indeed a great honour. I am particularly pleased because this is a Committee with which I have been closely associated for many years and in which I have many, many friends. I firmly believe that this Committee has been instrumental in furthering the peaceful uses of outer space by promoting international cooperation in space activities, particularly by the adoption of five international treaties and two sets of legal principles. It has also taken important steps to ensure that all countries, particularly the developing countries, benefit economically and socially from the applications of space science and technology. I hope we can continue this good record and build upon it. With the Committee's support and cooperation, I shall make every effort to justify the confidence placed in me. I shall endeavour to discharge the responsibilities assigned to me to the best of my ability.

The meeting was suspended at 4.50 p.m. and resumed at 5.10 p.m.

ATTENDANCE BY NON-MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The CHAIRMAN: Before we begin our discussion of item 5, "General exchange of views", at this, the 351st, meeting of the Committee, I should like to make a few remarks about the organization of our work.

I should like to inform members that we have received notes verbales from the Permanent Representatives of Greece, Malaysia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Spain and the Permanent Observer of the Holy See in which they request permission to attend the current session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space as observers. I should therefore like to suggest that, in conformity with past practice, we should invite the delegations of those countries to attend the current session of the Committee and address the Committee as appropriate.

This is, of course, without prejudice to further requests of this nature, and does not involve any decision by the Committee concerning status; it is a courtesy we customarily extend to delegations.

If there is no objection, we shall proceed accordingly.

It was so decided.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

Mr. MAIORSKI (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): First of all, I congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the Committee, but I must also admit that today as I take the floor in the Committee, I have a deep sense of sadness and loss because we are saying goodbye to Mr. Jankowitsch, a distinguished diplomat and a prominent

(Mr. Maiorski, USSR)

politician. One of the reasons the Soviet delegation asked to be allowed to speak first during the general exchange of views is that I am probably the only person here today - of course, apart from Mr. Jasentuliyana - who attended the first session of the Committee, held under the chairmanship of Mr. Jankowitsch, who was at the time the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations. Today, I am celebrating the twentieth anniversary of our participation in the work of the Committee and, although I have no pretentions to being the patriarch of the Committee, I want to say that I am absolutely sure that we have been very lucky that for some 20 years we have worked under the leadership of Peter Jankowitsch, who has today earned a place in the history of Austria as well as in the history of world diplomacy. As I say farewell, I wish him all success in his new work, and I assure him that we would like to remedy, to the extent possible, all the setbacks he mentioned in his closing remarks and, first of all, those to do with the international legislation on space. We also hope that Mr. Jankowitsch will not relinquish his ties with the Committee completely and that at some point we shall have the opportunity of working together again.

We are of course saddened by the fact that today we are bidding farewell to Mr. Jankowitsch, but we are still very confident that our work will be successful: one prominent Austrian diplomat has been replaced by another prominent Austrian diplomat - I am now addressing you directly, Mr. Chairman - who recently presided brilliantly over the Security Council and led it through a very difficult patch, both theoretically and practically, in its work. We think that with you the tradition goes on, especially since we have noticed that one Peter is being replaced by another Peter. We know you as a very

(Mr. Maiorski, USSR)

candid person, we know how calm and persistent you can be, what a good moderator you are, how devoted you are to your work. This devotion has become a legend in its own right, and so by now we are sure you will build on, and strengthen, the long traditions of chairing this Committee. We ourselves shall help you in carrying out your responsibilities. And now let me congratulate you one more time on your election as Chairman, and wish you all success in your work.

Our session is being held in a year in which we have all commemorated the thirtieth anniversary of the first human flight into space. Therefore, we decided that our statement in the general debate should be exclusively devoted to this thirtieth anniversary of Yuri Gagarin's flight and to the importance it has had for the world's exploration of space, and to the Soviet space exploration programme.

With us, as a member of the Soviet delegation, is a prominent Soviet scientist, an associate member of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union, Head of the Centre for Systems Design of the Ministry of Machine Construction, Valeriy Cherniavski, and I should like, with your permission, Mr. Chairman, to ask him to speak now.

Mr. CHERNIAVSKI (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): There are milestones in the history of the exploration of space, milestones which will forever remain, beyond a doubt, points of reference for all of us. The first human flight into space was indeed one such milestone; on 12 April 1961, the flight into space by a Soviet citizen on board the VOSTOK spacecraft was a great victory for the human spirit and also the beginning of the real breakthrough by humankind into the mysteries of the universe.

(Mr. Cherniavski, USSR)

After Gagarin's flight, there were to be other notable events: the first space walk, the historic landing of man on the moon, group flights and long-stay records, and flights by automatic interplanetary explorer stations to the outer planets of the solar system and beyond. All this, though, only became possible thanks to that first flight by humankind into space. The 12th of April 1961 is a watershed not only in the history of space exploration, but also in the history of humankind as well.

The phenomenon of humankind's breakout into space is far, far more than a scientific and technological triumph. World civilization, I think, knows of no other date on which there were events so tightly packed with fundamental significance or which had such an immense influence on social reality and consciousness.

(Mr. Cherniavski, USSR)

Firstly, as a result of Yuri Gagarin's flight, it was demonstrated that humankind did have the physiological and psychological ability to live and work in space. Potential opportunities to extend the practice of controlled interaction by humankind with nature became apparent, by studying the processes within phenomena, and the changes and transformations in them, directly from space. The preconditions were laid down for an extension into space of the noosphere, the sphere of interaction between nature and society, not only through humankind's activities in terms of fields (electromagnetic fields) but also through its activites in terms of materials.

Secondly, humankind's breakout into space inspired the community's belief both in the spatial flowering of the mind and also in the possibility of its unlimited progress through time. Putting together our own science and technology and that of the rest of the world, a collective of scientists and engineers, headed by S. Korolev, has created a space rocket system which would not only make possible near-Earth manned spaceflight but also lay the technological foundations for the exploration of the solar system. That the unique conditions for putting a manned spacecraft into Earth orbit, operating it in flight and bringing it back to Earth safely, have been met testifies to humankind's ability to improve the means of production and knowledge acquisition infinitely.

The significance of the first manned flight into space lies also in that it focused society's attention on knowing about problems on Earth. When he made one full orbit around the Earth in 108 minutes, Gagarin gave us a feeling for the smallness and limitedness of planet Earth, which up till then had seemed somehow unimaginably large to us, whose unity we could apprehend only in the abstract. We now felt ourselves to be passengers on a single spaceship, rushing through the universe.

(Mr. Cherniavski, USSR)

From space we can see the beauty of the blue planet and the wounds we have unwittingly inflicted on it by our activities. As a result, our relationship to our Earth has become more intelligent and careful.

Solving planetary problems requires international cooperation. Humankind's first flight into space was an essential political feature in strengthening the foundations of that cooperation.

The first manned flight in space had a great effect on the minds and consciousnesses of all people on our planet. Gagarin's achievement has become world property. Many countries later looked on the space pioneer as their own national hero: "Gagarin called us all into space", said the American astronaut, Neil Armstrong.

The Soviet people is proud that its country was the homeland of the first cosmonaut. This year, the famous date was widely commemorated in the Soviet Union. A commission, chaired by the President of the USSR, Mikhail Gorbachev, was formed to make preparations for the thirtieth anniversary of the first manned space flight, and prepared and adopted a plan for the steps that needed to be taken. In Moscow, Gagarin, Kaluga, Zvezdniy Gorodok - Star City - and a number of other places, there were public gatherings to celebrate the event, and exhibitions were shown, explaining Gagarin's flight. In Moscow and Leninsk, a conference of the Association of Spaceflight Participants was held, in which astronauts and cosmonauts from other countries also took part. In Zhitomir, there was a conference of the Association of Space Museums of the USSR. In Moscow, a meeting between representatives of the space industry was held called "Soviet - Western European Aerospace Dialogue". At the Baykonur launching site, there was an international festival entitled "The Stars of Space, Sport and Stage".

(Mr. Cherniavski, USSR)

The Vostok spacecraft's orbit of our planet stimulated rapid development in astronautics, the achievement of which is a gauge of the intellectual and economic development of the society. In the intial stage, the development of astronautics focused on launch vehicles to explore space by putting up various technical devices. This was the period of the reconnoitring and storming of space. In a very short space of time, astronautics was transformed into a specialized field of knowledge which is discovering the possibilities of the material forms and characteristics of space and using them in achieving its three fundamental goals: exploration, research and exploitation. Each of these goals is quite specific, and so within astronautics a number of scientific, technological and other trends have appeared, such as, for example, space research, space manufacturing, space computerization, space power generation, space physiology, space law and so on.

What binds together the goals of astronautics is that they are mutually supplementary, in that they are carried out in the space environment by applying the laws of mechanics, electrodynamics and information science. At the same time, the means for achieving these goals in the leading space States are very different because of the special features of their social, economic and technological environments. The Soviet space programmes and the industry needed to carry them out thus also have their special features.

In the field of space exploration, the Soviet Union has, since 1971, been carrying out planned work on setting up and operating a long-term orbital platform. In the past 30 years, 70 manned spacecraft have lifted from Baykonur launching site, and seven orbital platforms have taken crews of cosmonauts on board. As of now, over 70 Soviet and 16 foreign cosmonauts have flown in space using Soviet space technology. The total flying time in space spent by Soviet cosmonauts is over 20 man/years.

(Mr. Cherniavski, USSR)

On 18 May, a new international team lifted from Baykonur launching site; it included the first English austronaut and researcher, Helen Sharman. We are very pleased to say that the flight returned safely, and we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the British delegation.

In October this year, there will be another international flight, and an Austrian citizen will work on the station. Next year, we plan to include representatives of Germany and France.

If we have the financial allocation to do so in the next decade, we plan to develop the infrastructure for a continuously operating orbital automated assembly and operational complex, the Mir-2, intended to serve as a space hub in the longer term for interplanetary and orbital flight programmes, extended human stays in space and the development and production of space technology.

As we all know, wide-ranging manned space flight programmes are being carried out by the USA. Such programmes are also being developed by other countries too. Obviously, there is now a need to conduct an exchange of views and hold a detailed discussion of the international legal aspects of manned space flights. Naturally, a discussion of these issues within the Committee would be most fruitful.

To explore space and transport loads to research and exploit it, the USSR has created and is operating a range of rocket launchers which are very reliable. The Zenith, Proton and Energiya launchers are of particular interest. The ultra-heavy Energiya is the most powerful so far, and can launch a payload of about 100 tonnes into a 200 km orbit, and 18 tonnes into a geostationary orbit

(Mr. Cherniavski, USSR)

If we study the results achieved by astronautics over the 30 years since the first manned flight and forecast its development, we can say that in the foreseeable future, automatic space devices will play an essential role in exploiting space.

The recovery of lunar soil in 1970 by the Luna-16 automatic interplanetary probe and the successful flight in 1988 by the Buran space shuttle demonstrated that it is possible for the most complicated operations in space to be controlled automatically. Space research is being carried out by the Soviet Union with wide-ranging international cooperation, and is an inalienable part of a programme of fundamental research directed towards deepening and expanding our knowledge of the environment. The fundamental directions in this are the study of the planets of the solar system and solar-terrestrial links, and also astrophysical observations.

(Mr. Cherniavski, USSR)

Recently, we have obtained significant results in research into far space using the Soviet GRANAT and GAMMA orbital observatories, which were launched in December 1988 and July 1990, respectively.

For the planetological part of the space research programme, we plan to launch, in the near future - in 1994 to 1996 - the MARS-94 device, which will conduct research from Mars orbit, including atmospheric probes and direction finders, and to work on creating a system to recover Martian soil (MARS-96).

In the area of space exploitation, two trends have become apparent in world practice to date: first, in satellite computerization systems, including telecommunication, navigation and remote Earth sensing systems; and, secondly, in space manufacturing. The results from the PHOTON satellites and the KRISTALL module of the MIR orbital platform show that it is possible to manufacture materials and substances in microgravity with characteristics and purities impossible on Earth.

It is difficult to exaggerate the role which the telecommunication system has played in bringing information technology to the Soviet Union. In the Soviet Union we have created, for the first time in world practice, a system of multi-station access telecommunications of the Orbita type, and the Ehkran direct television broadcasting system. We plan to extend satellite telecommunications and increase their share of intercity traffic to 20 per cent, set up a national mobile telecommunications system, organize satellite broadcasting for the autonomous and the Union republics, and set up satellite electronic mail.

(Mr. Cherniavski, USSR)

As part of our satellite navigation systems, we are at present using the Tsikada navigation system; the Soviet part of the international system for rescuing crews of vessels and aircraft which have suffered accidents is also operating. The Glonas system is undergoing final testing.

Satellite remote sensing in the USSR is used to explore our natural resources, for mapping, environmental monitoring, obtaining meteorological information and observing the ice situation at northern latitudes. For these purposes, the RESURS and OKEAN satellites will be launched and a continuously operating space meteorological system is being set up based on the low-orbit satellite METEOR and a satellite in geostationary orbit.

At the present stage, expenditures on creating space techniques, which increases in a non-linear way with our desire to penetrate further into space and apprehend its nature, are begining to be a problem. Astronautics has come close to a frontier, at which movement forward is possible only if we integrate our efforts at the international level. Not only such resource-intensive programmes as the exploration of the Moon and Mars, but also the whole range of operations involved in the applied use of space for the sake of the Earth, cannot find solutions in just one country, however developed.

Competition and rivalry stimulate progress until competition and rivalry turn the means for achieving the goals into ends in themselves. The experience of the leading space States is convincing proof that this is so. We are aware that this problem is not only, and not so much, a scientific and technical one as a political and commercial one. However, it is our firm conviction that we have no choice but to solve it.

(Mr. Cherniavski, USSR)

The Soviet Union is prepared to cooperate. The words of the President of the USSR, Mr. Gorbachev, are proof of this: at a public meeting to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the first manned space flight, he said, in the Hall of Pillars of the Trades Union Building in Moscow, that our space science and technology are as never before wide open for international cooperation, that the Soviet Union is for access to all countries to space information under United Nations auspices and that the Soviet Union is prepared to offer its capabilities to this end. We convey these words to the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of the Soviet Union, and I would like to emphasize, in this context, how much I was honoured to hear the kind words by my old friend Boris Maiorski. It is really a rare occasion when one hears such kind words coming from a member of our Committee who has served for 20 years representing his country, a major space Power in this case. He may have noticed that I blushed during his speech.

Mr. PEREK (Czechoslovakia): It is a pleasure, Mr. Chairman, to be once again at a meeting hosted by your country. The meeting in Vienna in 1977 in a historic hall in the Hofburg, and the friendly atmosphere of the city, are still very well remembered. We are sure that the charming city of Graz, a cultural centre with a technical high school and a university boasting several Nobel Prize winners, will make our stay most agreeable.

My delegation would like to express its thanks to Secretary of State Jankowitsch for his many years of successful chairmanship of this Committee. We appreciate all the positive results this Committee achieved under his wise and experienced guidance. My delegation welcomes the new Chairman,

(Mr. Perek, Czechoslovakia)

Ambassador Hohenfellner, and we are looking forward to fruitful cooperation. For our part, we are prepared to assist you, Mr. Chairman, in the difficult task of advancing and supporting the peaceful role of this Committee, and of maintaining outer space as an area for activities beneficial to the whole of mankind.

May I also use this opportunity to express our thanks to the Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, Professor John Carver, and to the Chairman of the Legal Subcommittee, Mr. Vaclav Mikulka, for guiding the work of the Subcommittees in a most efficient manner. The secretariat also deserves our appreciation for the careful preparation of the numerous documents needed for our sessions and for the sessions of our Subcommittees. Our recognition goes also to those organizations, within as well as outside the United Nations system, which submitted reports and thereby assisted us in our work.

May I just mention the report of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), which shows the ever-growing interest of many countries in the geostationary orbit. We see that the number of notified space stations in the geostationary orbit, the number of stations being coordinated and the number of those with advance publication are increasing steadily. We may expect within five years over 660 space stations operating in the geostationary orbit.

We find most useful the reports by the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) and the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) which give an overview of the state of the art in space science and technology.

(Mr. Perek, Czechoslovakia)

As regards space activities in our country, we can report that after considerable effort the satellite Magion 2 was reactivated and worked successfully until November 1990. In cooperation with its parent satellite Intercosmos 24, it provided much data on the space structure of geomagnetic effects. These data are now being processed.

At this time, our delegation would like to present only a few comments on the agenda items before us.

As regards the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82, we highly value the concrete steps being undertaken in realizing such benefits of space applications as the long-range fellowships, the technical advisory services and all the training courses and seminars carried out in 1990 and planned for this and next year.

In this context, we would like to mention that very recently our Government experts met to consider, together with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the application of geographical systems in managing natural resources and protecting the living environment in our country. Another course along these lines will be held in the Slovak Republic under the auspices of the Slovak Commission for the Environment.

Important steps forward have been taken in both Subcommittees on the item on nuclear-power sources. We support the conclusion in paragraph 63 of the report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee that further studies should be conducted on the problem of collisions of nuclear-power sources with space debris. If an expert group is established to consider the problem, its mandate should call for studying the danger of collisions of space debris in general becuase it is a problem that might adversely affect all active space objects.

(Mr. Perek, Czechoslovakia)

On agenda items 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10, we appreciate the information which has been offered on transportation systems and on such branches of science as life sciences, environment, planetary exploration and astronomy. The development of sciences due to the application of space methods and space instrumentation is most remarkable. It will find many direct applications in a short time-scale as well as in a longer perspective.

In the report of the Legal Subcommittee we notice that the Working Group decided to discuss separately the two aspects of the agenda item - the definition and delimitation of outer space on the one hand, and the geostationary orbit on the other. This decision is logical and brings to mind the idea that a separate discussion of each of the two subject matters, possibly under two agenda items, might increase effectiveness.

The General Assembly, in resolution 45/72, considered that space debris could be an appropriate subject for discussion by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in the future. My delegation is of the opinion that the time has already come when the subject should be put on the agenda of the Committee and its Subcommittees. We would like to join the efforts of those delegations which put forward proposals in this respect last year.

The problem of space debris and its possible harmful interference with active space objects, including manned missions, has been recognized by the scientific community. It is not a new subject for this Committee. Several studies on the danger of space debris prepared by the Outer Space Affairs Division, by the International Astronautical Federation and by the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) are in the lists of documents of past sessions. As a matter of fact, the first document was put before this Committee in 1980 - 11 years ago. Very detailed studies on space debris were prepared and published by the European Space Agency in 1988 and by the Interagency

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Group on Space for the National Security Council in Washington in 1989. The latter study and its conclusions appeared in the United Nations document entitled "Activities of Member States: information provided by the United States of America".

Space debris poses an environmental problem. The danger of a collision and consequent damage to or loss of a satellite is fairly small at present, but it is inexorably rising and before long a critical density of debris in space may be reached - if indeed this has not already happened at some altitudes. We can envisage an avalanche of collisions of debris and the growth of unstable regions, until finally the space environment could become hostile to space activities. Consequently, space debris has to be handled as an environmental problem. In the first place, no time should be lost in our starting to discuss it and, in the second place, preventive measures should be considered. These are much more effective and less expensive than remedial measures attempting to remove the pollution - in this case removing debris already in orbit.

It has been established beyond doubt that space debris can and will harmfully interfere with space activities. No additional studies are necessary to confirm this fact, which has been known for several years and which alone is a justification for our starting to discuss the problem. This Committee is the most suitable forum because the recommendations or agreements have to be adopted on an international basis. The matter concerns all launching States and agencies and all present and future users of outer space.

Discussions in this Committee and its Subcommittees will focus the attention of the scientific and legal communities on those aspects of the problem which require further study. Without this focus, studies addressing crucial aspects may not be forthcoming. In fact, the question of space debris

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is already on our agenda. Under the item "Use of nuclear-power sources in space", the Scientific and Technical and the Legal Subcommittees, as well as the main Committee, are already discussing the danger of collisions between space debris and satellites with nuclear-power sources on board. Collisions with debris are, of course, dangerous to all spacecraft.

Even relatively easy and inexpensive measures, such as recommendations to minimize new debris and to avoid unintentional explosions and break-ups would be highly useful given the international authority of this Committee. If the Committee finds a little time in its schedule to discuss the question of putting the item of space debris on its agenda, our delegation would be only too pleased to present a more detailed proposal.

Mr. GONZALEZ (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): At the outset, I should like to thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of this beautiful and marvelous country, Mr. Alcis Mock, for his kind words to us. He not only encouraged us in our work but his presence demonstrated the importance Austria attaches to the subject. We would also like to express our gratitude to the representative of the Secretary-General for his remarks; we are grateful also for the warm welcome we have had from the Mayor of Graz and the Governor of Styria.

I must say that I have mixed feelings about Peter Jankowitsch's departure from the chairmanship. On the one hand, we no longer have guiding our work a man who has excellent professional qualifications and has very often bypassed protocol to smooth the course of our work.

(Mr. Gonzalez, Chile)

Furthermore, Mr. Jankowitsch has had a special relationship with our country. He was one of the personalities who came to observe the plebiscite that led to the return of democracy to Chile. We express our heartfelt thanks to Mr. Jankowitsch and wish him well in his important future work.

On the other hand, we welcome your election, Sir, as Chairman of the Committee. It is certainly an honour for us that the Austrian Ambassador to the United Nations should fill that role. We congratulate you. We are convinced that your experience in the field will ensure that the thirty-fourth session and future sessions of the Committee will bear fruit for the development of international space law.

Chile is a country that wishes to progress on all fronts, including cooperation between nations and the applications of space technology. To do this, we are working hard in many areas: economically, we are fortunate to have had our seventh year of sustained growth on a stable and lasting basis; politically, we have returned to democracy and are at present strengthening that process; internationally, among other things, we are promoting the strengthening of multilateral systems in a framework of confidence and stability among the partners in those systems.

We believe that this is the only realistic way to deal with the problems of development. It is precisely our commitment to multilateralism and to integration that leads us today, on this solemn occasion, to express our satisfaction at being able to announce officially that the Government of Chile will in 1992 host the second space conference of the Americas, whose aim is to analyze the degree of progress achieved in regional cooperation projects identified in the first conference, held in Costa Rica. We hope on that occasion to have the cooperation of all countries of the region and of the

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United Nations Outer Space Affairs Division, and the participation at the very highest level of all the countries involved. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile will in due time be sending out invitations to countries and to international and non-governmental organizations working on the exploration and development of outer space. We believe that this will be a unique opportunity to continue and intensify the development of space-related matters among the countries of the region in a manner that we hope will be effective.

As I mentioned earlier, Chile, like all the States represented here, attaches great importance to the present climate of peace and international détente. We believe that this Committee has an important role to play in that regard. The 10 days that we are meeting here in a neutral country, Austria, provide us with an environment conducive to recgonizing the obvious: that an analysis in this forum of the ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes - item 6 of the agenda - necessarily requires an assessment and study of aspects related to the non-peaceful uses - in other words, the militarization - of outer space.

As regards item 7 of the agenda - Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee - we understand that there will be no great problems in adopting it. We none the less wish to point out that the developing countries, with very few exceptions, have generally been underrepresented in that Subcommittee as a further result of the vicious circle of poverty: we are developing countries and therefore do not have the necessary technical means to develop space capacity; but without that, our activity in the Subcommittee cannot be greater or more important than it is and we are therefore underrepresented. The developing countries thus cannot have access to one of the sources of that technical capacity, which is the Scientific and T hnical Subcommittee and its important work.

(Mr. Gonzalez, Chile)

One way of breaking the vicious circle would be the provision of assistance to us by the Outer Space Affairs Division. Thus, if we want the greater and more serious participation in the Subcommittee of countries that do not have a space capacity, logically we would have try to increase the Division's budget in order for it to provide such assistance. We urgently need to determine ways and means of ensuring that the space Powers contribute more effectively to the financing of the space-applications programmes and plans, particularly those related to the developing countries. The Outer Space Affairs Division has been working on this most effectively.

As to item 8 - Report of the Legal Subcommittee - we understand that this should also be adopted without much difficulty. But we would like to highlight the progress made in the Working Group on legal aspects related to the application of the principle that the exploration and utilization of outer space should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all States, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries. There is a proposal from a number of countries, Chile among them, for a set of principles or ideas that would serve as a basis for negotiations on that subject. We call upon the Committee to consider that proposal, which should be taken into account at the next session of the Legal Subcommittee.

As regards the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82, we wish to make the following general comments. Ten years have passed since the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Much water has flowed under the bridge. Not only have the men and Governments of that time changed, but also ideas and their consequences. The cold war is over. The idea of the nation-State is no longer so clear. Political and economic blocs are forming. The international agenda on

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subjects such as the environment, drug trafficking, and others, has been globalized.

In other words, we are living in a different world in which the notion of international cooperation has also undergone changes. Thirty years ago the standard under which the developing countries launched their attacks on the relevant international legal instruments was different. Today, that concept of international cooperation is being reassessed, rethought and redefined. It must involve all States in the world, with no dogmatic divisions. Perhaps in 1992, when we celebrate international space year and international environment year, we will have an opportunity to relaunch the subject of international cooperation in many areas, including that of space, from a realistic and pragmatic but also an ethical standpoint.

Finally, as regards item 10 - Spin-off benefits of space technology - we must recognize one fact. We have been provided with an interesting history of space activity running through all the degrees of progress in the field. However, apart from its academic use, at least as regards our delegation we do not see any clear link between that history and the benefits that may devolve upon the countries members of the Committee that do not have a technological capacity. As we have often repeated, this Committee is an organ of the United Nations and as such cannot divorce technical from political aspects. Our conclusions should try to ensure compatibility between the two worlds, which is not the case with the item in question. We hope that at this session we shall be able to establish measures that will make the information provided more operative.

We sincerely hope that in this beautiful environment the work of the Committee may be fruitful and establish new landmarks in the legal and

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political aspects of space activity. But taking a step forward is not enough. Our advance must be solidly and seriously secured so that we do not take steps backwards in the future.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.